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ABSTRACT

This paper presents an outline of kindergarten goals for the seventies along with specific suggestions for supporting classroom activities. The kindergarten goals are divided into four developmental areas: (1) Cognitive or Intellectual Development (with emphasis on concept development, or "content skills" and mastery or "process skills"); (2) Affective Development (with emphasis on building positive self-concepts); (3) Psychomotor Development (with emphasis on building gross and fine muscles, developing eye-hand coordination and teaching health and safety); and (4) Social Development (with emphasis on the development of abilities to participate in group experiences, responsibility, and self-discipline. After each goal is identified, the importance and relationship of the goal to current classroom kindergarten practices is discussed. It is suggested that the contemporary kindergarten using these four goals as a procedural framework can provide for the maximum growth of the 5-year-old child. Educators are urged to reexamine their goals in order to guard against one-dimensional planning in kindergarten programs. (CS)

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KINDERGARTEN GOALS FOR THE SEVENTIES

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Kindergarten Goals for the Seventies

Typical goals for traditional kindergarten programs have been: (1) getting the child ready for the first grade, (2) teaching reading and mathematics readiness, and (3) socializing the child. These goals have perpetrated the "sandpile" aspect of the kindergarten; as a place where children learn finger plays, sing songs, ride bikes and piddle in the sand box. Each of these goals and activities are essentially isolationist. They relate to only one aspect of the child's total development and virtually ignore other vital areas of development. These goals are firmly anch in the belief that five year old children are not capable of more sophisticated educational involvement. Such a view is evidently contrary to the findings of Bloom who states:

> "Since our estimate suggests about 17% of the growth takes place between ages 4 and 6, we could hypothesize that. . . kindergarten could have far-reaching consequences on the child's general learning pattern."[1]

Bloom further contends that 1/5 of the child's growth occurs within only 2 years or 3% of the child's entire life.[2] In the context of traditional goals this phenomenal growth is literally undirected and haphazard. It would appear obvious, that new goals must be developed in order to adequately and constructively aid the child in his growing and learning potential. Traditionalists defend their goals against the need for new objectives based on the child's development be saying we must allow the child his "right-to-be-five." Defenders of contemporary goals retort we must allow the child to "develop to his full potential." Current educators are stressing

> ". . .it is not the job of kindergarten to get them(children) ready for first grade, nor is it (kindergarten) a readiness period for school work in an isolated area such as reading has been thought in the past."[3]

Educational leaders such as Hunt, Deutsch, and Robert Gagne contend that children can learn at an earlier age than was formeerly considered "possible." New goals must be structured to meet the child's developmental needs. Specifically goals to aid the child in the areas of (1) cognitive, (2) affective, (3) social, and (4) psychomotor development. However, contemporary kindergarten goals must be integrated into one comprehensive curriculum rather than emphasized singlely in various unidimensional curricula. After all, the child develops as an integrated whole and is not made up of singular aspects juxtaposed in a tiny body.

Inherent in the aspect of the child's developmental growth is the concept of action-experience. The child grows through doing.[4] Of course the child will still play in the sandbox, such play is fundamental. However, contemporary goals direct play into several concept areas, such as: (1) understandings of volumn, mass, and surface area; (2) understandings of self-worth and creative ability; (3) understandings of sharing, cooperating, helping and (4) development of gross and fine finger and hand muscle coordination, and eye-hand interaction. Play directed according to goals of the four listed developmental areas is in contrast to the non-directed sand box play found under traditional goals. Hymes contends:

> "Growth and development. . .whether physical, intellectual or emotional. . .requires a very active interplay between the child and the world around him."[5]

One must further notice that contemporary kindergarten goals do not delineate teaching method. One can establish goals for the seventies within any desired pedagogy.

> "The perpetuation of each program may simply have a different point of view regarding the proper procedure for assisting in the development of. . . (the child)."[6]

A clear delineation of kindergarten goals for the seventies is now in order. After each goal is identified, the importance and relationship of the goals to the contemporary approach in the kindergartens is explicated. Finally, supporting activities that can be used in the classroom and the relationships between the specific component and the activities will be described.

Cognitive or Intellectual Goals

1. Contemporary kindergarten goals emphasize development and a foundation for content skills.

The foundation and content areas such as reading, mathematics, social studies, science, the arts, and related skills are cultivated through concept development programs.[7] Concept development can be regarded as planned activities which are determined by the teacher and built upon key content ideas. Key content ideas or root learnings are derived from academic disciplines which are repositories of man's accumulated knowledge about his world (e.g. linguistics, mathematics, social sciences, physical sciences). Concept development in this sense is considered as a building block for thinking, perceiving, and remembering. This goal becomes extremely important in light of the fact that cognition proceeds through stages of structural reorganization. Researchers Bruner,[8] Bruner, Oliver, and Greenfield,[9] Piaget[10] and Hunt[11] have contended that cognitive functions or modes of action are continuously changing from one stage to the next. The implication underlying this goal is that the source of cognitive order and development is found within the structure of the interaction between the young child and the environment. The crucial interaction between children and the environment used in building a foundation of content skills mandates involvement through experiences and activities.

In reading, for example, five year old children experience and learn about a circus. They may come in contact with animals, trains, uniquely dressed people, games, etc. With these basic experiences, the kindergarten teacher could develop key ideas and related aspects of the circus (e.g. animal feeding, circus life, etc.). By using language in context with experience, words come alive for they are part of an adventure that is really happening. Afterwards, the experiences can be retold with the teac her using written symbols or writing if he chooses. Perhaps with more experiences, the teacher may decide to develop additional root learnings in reading, for example, directionality, top to bottom, and "making the return sweep."

In mathematics, concept development must again be structured in and through experiences. For example, at kindergarten snack time, children can live number concepts by matching one cracker and napkin with each child. Afterwards, this basic root learning of matching (or corresponding) can be associated with number symbols, zero to ten or more. Later on, the children will be counting out toys, construction paper, scissors, etc. In this way other root learnings can be developed by associating other language labels with action.

Concept development can also be built into other content areas such as social studies, science, the arts, etc. Each of the concept development areas must be interwoven into the fabric that constitutes the cognitive growth of the child. Each concept may be thought of as a thread which adds to the strength of the entire cloth, and concepts which are omitted may lead to faults in the material. Concepts, however, are not the only skills in the cognitive area. Process skills are also essential to the child's cognitive development.

2. Contemporary kindergarten goals emphasize development and a foundation for process skills.

Just as the five year old learns content skills, the child also learns process skills. According to the Wellings',[12] National Education Program Associates, process skills are associated with problem solving, processes of observing, inquiring, generalizing, experimenting, discovering, classifying, verifying, and quantifying. Hildebrand[13] further includes decision making, dealing with observable conflict, and creating, as process skills which are also learned.

The process skills, then, are procedures for observing the environment, incorporating new information, applying observations and information to solutions, and arriving at conclusions. Mastery of the process skills develops through the child's interaction with the environment. Manipulating and exploring the world provides a foundation for cognitive structure. This structure ". . . is a process of evolution by stages from sensorimotor activities through concrete operations to formal operations."[14] A kindergarten program that provides experiences in problem solving, communicating, decision making, and creating, facilitates the development of young children. Process skills allow the young child to examine, build and grow toward a cognitive structure, lessening the possibilities of failure, frustration, and learning fatigue. Here the child masters process skills in conjunction with product or content skills.

Process skills may easily be developed through the child's play. During water play, for example, a child may be ready to place a toy boat in a pan of water. Before he does, the teacher may ask the child, "Will the toy boat float or will it sink?" The child is being asked to make a prediction, and must observe and relate his observations and apply those

observations to a solution. The child then tests his solution by placing the boat in the water. The session can continue with the child gathering several objects, predicting if they will float or sink, testing the prediction, classifying objects into those that float and those that do not float, and lastly making a generalization about floating objects. This kind of practice using process skills may be applied to many other situations, for example, sand box play, swinging, climbing, playing on a see-saw, standing still. The number and variety of experiences is important to the child's developing concepts, but also the practice is important in developing the process skills themselves, so that they may be used without the aid of outside questioning. Finally process and product skills help children develop interest and appreciation for their environment.

A contemporary kindergarten provides time; and teacher gives opportunities to develop observing, inquiring, exploring, experimenting, and decision making skills. However, these process skills are not developed in isolation from content skills. Katz,[15] among others, stresses that skill development in content areas is acquired by young children as tools with which to study their environment.

Creating, unlike some process skills, is extremely complex. In fact, our existing knowledge may not be adequate to plan conditions in which creative behavior is stimulated, taught to, and learned by all children. However, the early educator can teach various components that comprise creativity such as fluency (e.g. production of a large number of ideas in short periods of time); originality (e.g. manipulation of construction materials into many, many unusual designs); and, complexity (e.g selection of more complex activities in place of simpler ones). To develop fluency, for example, the teacher could provide a sandbox pail and spoon and ask the child to identify ways in which they could be used.

Affective Goals

1. Contemporary kindergarten goals facilitate building positive self concepts.

Children's awareness of social class differences according to Leeper, et al,[16] seems to emerge and develop around the intermediate grades, or earlier. Children's awareness of self, however, probably occurs from birth onward. Expressing feelings seems to be first linked to physical characteristics of the body or reflects how children behave in situations. Being told he or she is "fat", a "cry-baby", "dumb", "bad", or using other negative statements to describe behavior contributes to the development of anxiety, resentment, shame, guilt, and hostility in the child. A child's own physical, mental and affective characteristics in conjunction with what adults do and say to him (her) build self concept. The view young children hold of themselves determines how they feel about themselves. The earlier the child has positive experiences in connection with body and environmental situations, the earlier he or she begins to build a positive image.

Children are explorers--groping and finding new information to replace the old. They are explorers setting off to study the unknowns. The concept young children have of themselves deternines what they find. Children who feel that they are loved, that they are worthwhile and have contributions to make invariably explore the environment and learn without fear. Knowing that they have adult support, children build positive self concepts leading to eventual independence. On the other hand, a negative self concept, places an unseen tether on children in the form of anxiety[17] and emotional blackmail.[18] In exploring, these children limit themselves to "safe" areas. By restricitng themselves, the growth potential of these children with negative self

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concepts become limiting. West contends,[19] that emphasis on ". . . objectives relating to feeling and to committment . . ." must be developed in the contemporary school. Not only is self concept linked to how children view the environment, but it is invariably associated with the individual's success in school and throughout life. Self concept then is important in determining what children say, do, and consequently think about themselves and others. The school must facilitate children's feelings of self importance, sense of trust, their skills in dealing with the expectations of home and the kindergarten and the ability to express themselves through words and actions.

To develop positive experiences in the kindergarten the teacher accepts each child and believes in him. A teacher also shows support, and trust in establishing a warm relationship by using the child's name, encouraging facial expressions and eye contact through use of symbols of sympathy and understanding such as a pat on the shoulder, and by frequent and meaningful conversations with each child.

A good way to shape and build positive self concepts is individualizing instruction in which the kindergarten teacher realizes the child's talents and more importantly, makes it evident by accepting and rewarding the child's knowledge and accomplishments.

Another method used to reinforce positive self concepts is to build a classroom atmosphere in which communication is open between the five year old and kindergarten teacher. The teacher must help the children to understand, label and accept feelings; for example, "It's okay to feel sad when you loose something you love. It is the way you should feel." Or, "I know you are angry at me but you must understand that. . ."

Other ways of helping children to express and channel feelings are through (1) art: including clay, drawing, carving, fingerpainting (2) physical education activities; including vigorous exercises and games (3) music: accompanied with singing, moving, and clapping and (4) dramatic play and storytelling.

Psychomotor Goals

1. Contemporary kindergarten goals help build gross and fine muscle development and eye-hand coordination.

It is often observed that children with learning difficulties exhibit some kind of movement or motor problem.[20] Much of the growth and development of the young child takes place through gross-motor and perceptual-motor movement. Piaget, Hunt, or Kephart, for example, do not see development as an automatic unfolding but as a process delayed or accelerated by experiences within the child's environment.[21] Skubic and Anderson[22] in further support found a positive relationship between intelligence and perceptual motor ability and between achievement and perceptual motor ability in young children.

Sensory motor and perceptual motor processes not only allow the child to explore the world but also provide him with necessary tools for mental and social development. Emphasizing gross muscle development, eye-hand coordination, balance, and rest or relaxation, perfects the child's abilities to walk, run, skip, jump, and climb. Kindergarten children also learn to control their bodies as an additional outcome of increasing gross muscle development and eye-hand coordination. The same process of following sequence in walking and climbing is necessary to overcome egocentrism and develop conservation. "The roots of operational as well as pre-operational

thought must . . . lie in sensory motor development--the meaningful use of language is closely tied to developing through patterns."[23] Another importance of gross motor development and eye-hand coordination is seen through children's play. By providing freedom for exploring and moving through play, early educators supply children with ingredients for the recipe of success with symbolic learning. Kindergarten programs that still emphasize gross muscle development, eye-hand coordination on the playground and the control associated with sedentary activities in the classroom must be re-examined in light of current research of the late 1960's and 1970's. Because large and small muscles and eye-hand coordination are so essential to young children, the entire kindergarten program must provide opportunities and encourage these types of growth.

Gross motor skills are learned, developed, and strengthened, in active play outdoors and indoors.[24] Large blocks, an old mattress to jump on, swings, slides, climbing apparatus, walking forward and backward on a balance beam (e.g. narrow rail), running, and riding bicycles, all provide opportunities for children to build large muscles. All of the examples identified, illustrate some form of lifting, walking, running, jumping, and climbing.

Fine motor development also demands attention in kindergarten. Basic skills such as visual and auditory attention, grasping, and releasing, and using straws and paper cups at snack time, hammering and sawing egg cartons and orange crates also strengthens samll muscles. Large quantities of dough can be pounded, squeezed, pinched, slapped, and toys and materials with levers, handles, and/or pulleys are effective materials for stimulating fine muscle development. A sandbox with durable accessories of various types, especially things that can be filled, offers teachers a myriad of opportunities for further psychomotor development.

Hand-eye coordination (e.g. hand skills) and fine motor skills are interrelated and developed by tieing shoestrings, buttoning jackets and sweaters, cutting with scissors, building with unit blocks, making letters, and tearing and crumbling paper. It is also facilitated through water play, soap painting, finger painting, using clay and other gooey and smeary materials. Development of both gross and fine motor development must be given attention inside the classroom walls and outside on the playground.

2. Contemporary kindergarten goals teach health and safety.

Health and safety are important aspects of psychomotor growth of young children. In the area of health, from moments of conception to birth and from birth onward, children are affected by what feeds their bodies. A diet composed of many foods lacking in protein such as milk, eggs, cheese, meat, fish, and poultry effect development of a child's brain in ways that make him less able to learn. It occurs in families who either can't afford the kinds of required foods or in those who lack knowledge about its significances. Research studies[24] have shown that when health needs cannot be adequately met, children cannot develop to their fullest potential. For this reason supplemental meals as well as dental and medical care are considered essential parts of contemporary kindergarten programs.

The safety and physical welfare of young children is as important as nutritional and medical needs. Age old admonitions used by teachers and parents such as "don't cross streets" or "don't ride with strangers" must be supplemented by teaching an awareness for safety and first aid. The technology of today makes it increasingly dangerous to be a child. The lure of what is seen on television must be countered by knowledge of

safety rules and sense. Accidents, illness, and disease limit the effectiveness of children's psychomotor as well as their developmental growth regardless of the quantity of materials in the learning environment. Wet shoes replaced with dry ones, an extra sweater when a child seems cold, and safety rules for daily activities all contribute to the children's growth. Goals for health and safety also produce and additional but related benefit of building feelings in children that an adult cares and is concerned about them. A corollary to this is, "The more complicated a society, the greater is the need for the fundamental knowledge--how to live with others, for others, with self, for self."[25] The teacher in conjunction with the children can help them understand, establish, and maintain "limits" within which they all are able to operate. The trial and error or no guidance approach not only is a hazardous path for contemporary teachers to follow in building psychomotor development but this technique can develop insecurity in young children. Health and safety is probably one of the best means of helping children to become aware of themselves and the world around them.

Health for the five year old can no longer be limited to the "time-honored" activities of the kindergarten as "handwashing before snacks-lunch and after bathroom" or "daily inspections". Contemporary ideas related to health in the kindergarten emphasize the complete physical, mental, and social well-being of the five year old and the importance of a healthful environment. Examples of applied aspects of health in body structure and function include: (1) awareness and understanding of growth in height and weight; (2) use of our sense organs and (3) the development of teeth. Some important skills of body care and grooming for five year olds are: (1) proper care of our clothes; (2) wearing clothing suitable for the environment and (3) keeping hair clean.

In the area of safety and first aid contemporary kindergarten goals include: (1) identifying the child's full name, address, name of parents, and his school; (2) using sliding boards and other equipment properly; (3) knowing that one should accept rides only from persons that are known and (4) understanding that electrical equipemtn must be used with care.

Social Goals

1. Contemporary kindergarten goals provide for developing social concepts and group experiences.

All social concepts and abilities to participate in groups are learned. According to Havighurst[26] these objectives of social learning are part of school curricula. Young children learn to establish their roles as individuals within our culture. Socialization helps children grow, to become aware, to become familiar with what people around them expect, and to know what they can expect from other people. Socialization, coming in all forms of school activity, is (1) learning to get along with other children, (2) seeing things that mothers and fathers do, (3) playing with toys, and (4) getting acquainted with the community and kindergarten. With these group experiences, affective development of the young kindergarten child is nurtured and developed. With these basic experiences, children are more likely to become active members of society rather than mere observers. Children need teachers' and parents' help to develop satisfying relationships withich in turn build social concepts and group experiences.

In building social skills, teachers can take advantage of the action oriented five year old, who generally prefers to play with one or two children in a group setting. The teacher can capitalize upon the small group setting by teaching equality and individual rights which are basic

to group experiences and social contacts. The child's group must follow social guides such as taking turns, listening when another is speaking, personal ownership, etc. as practical principles rather than as the personal authority of the teacher. "Sharing time" and active classroom discussions can help children make positive observations about others in the froup. Letting the children talk about things they enjoy and experiences they have had is another method of developing social goals. This may encourage shy children and assist in keeping attention on the needs and interests of others.

The child must be given other opportunities to interact with people outside his own peer groups. Planned experiences and direct contact with school personnel, school environment and trips to points of interest in the community support the child's social growth. Role playing, using situations in the child's own home and family also broaden skills. To live, work, and play with children who have different skin color, capacities, and diverse experiences is also important in social development. Teaching social goals, like teaching other developmental goals, takes skilled guidance, thoughtful interpretations of observed experiences, and several appropriate kinds of "action-oriented" opportunities to initiate and develop concepts in five year old children.

2. Contemporary kindergarten goals teach responsibility and self discipline.

Responsibility and self discipline, also a part of contemporary kindergarten goals, have common intersections with social and group experiences. Through group experiences and social concepts, responsibility and self discipline develop. Responsibility and self discipline are also crucial to our democracy and basic to our society. These goals can gradually be acquired by children through knowledge as to whether their behaviors are

acceptable to others and by making decisions based upon definite viable alternatives. This assists the young child's move toward independent thinking and essentially prepares him for shifts from parental to peer group to societal functioning.

Much is expected of the adult in interacting within the world. In order to function as best as possible the child must be given basic opportunities to master the complexities of social living.

For the five year old child, the classroom provides opportunity to learn responsibility. Daily routines of eating, sleeping, and cleaning up help the child learn competency in managing routine situations. The teacher can also leave responsibility of watering plants, feeding fish, reseting chairs and other classroom duties to the children. Activities, as these, when understood, practiced and lived have greater probabilities of developing by principle rather than by authority.

As another social goal, every five year old must begin to learn self discipline. Adults should expect self discipline and set examples. Definite limits and expectations must be established and it is essential for children to know what is expected of them as class members. A great deal of time should be allowed so that many opportunities for choosing occur throughout the day. In this way children are encourage to develop and carry out their own goals. There are many decisions kindergarten teachers make for the five year old child which he is more capable of making, and in fact needs to make in order to learn self discipline.

Implementing the Entire Developmental Approach with the Whole Child

Based upon the four facets of developmental growth and the seven enumerated goals as a procedural framework, the contemporary kindergarten

program is aimed at providing maximum growth for all five year old children. However, intellectual, affective psychomotor and social facets of the developmental model do not function separately and independently within each child. Procedurally, the multiple developmental model has unity; operationally, the child is a whole being. The purpose of the contemporary kindergarten is for the developmental growth of the whole child.

As noted, self concept of the young child develops from birth on. It seems clear that self concept emerges and develops only in the presence of family and peer groups through comparisons with others serving as guides. Because self concept influences what children do, say, and think, it has important intersections with every aspect of the developmental model; the objective being the appreciation of self as a unique and important individual. Sex role identification and the understanding of femaleness and maleness is a facet of self concept. Negative feelings, jealousy, ambivalent feelings, and concerns of children over variations in body must be dealt with in context of positive self concept and the whole child. The family is also a part of the self and provides a base for thinking, feeling and doing. Then too, the community contributes to building self concept. The neighborhood in which people live, the style of houses, yards, and pets, plus the children's friends provide experiences which build, shape, and mold the cognitive, affective, social, and psychomotor development.

Evidences of process skills can be found in almost every aspect of the developmental model of growth. The natural curiosity of children using appropriate teacher questioning techniques can do much to develop the whole child. It is crucial for children to say what they want to find out and to state their questions of importance and concern. Provisions for trying

suggested solutions to their questions based upon an interaction between the child and materials brings every growth are into operation. Process skills when interrelated across other developmental areas of growth are as important as final solutions to problems.

The development of fine motor, eye-hand coordination, and balance is not only crucial to psychomotor growth but is an important part of total development. The ability to control and manage the body in numerous activities and possession of specific game skills are incalcuable assets for children in winning peer group roles, and establishing friends with other children. Through psychomotor growth, kindergarten children build feelings of self confidence in relation to their activities. In using the school equipment and performing in classroom activities, children improve upon sharing behaviors, taking turns, and socially relating and interrelating with other children. The use of nature walks for science and social studies, and the hopping up and down on the number line in mathematics builds cognitive skills in symbol readiness in social development. Additional intersections between psychomotor growth and the whole developing child include:[27]

1. building feelings of confidence through awareness
2. developing perspective
3. learning to take turns
4. solving problems

Health and safety not only are important in kindergarten as psychomotor goals but contribute to the children's total developmental growth. As soon as possible children must learn health habits, safety and precautions commensurate with their ages. Kindergarten learning experience can be of help only to children who are physically and mentally ready for learning experiences.

The child's health affects his classroom mood, learning, concept of and feelings about himself, and relation with parents and with other children.[28]

Responsibility and self discipline as social goals are also integrated with cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects of development. The acquisition of responsibility and self discipline is characteristic of a fully functioning person.[29] Associated with these goals is a willingness to try new ideas, activities, and experiences, and to let others have turns, to gain job satisfaction, to recognize ownership, and to develop consideration for the welfare and convenience of others.

Developing social concepts and group experiences is part of the multiple developmental model. Felling wanted, valued and cared for by peers and adults is basic to social concepts. Becoming a social person and developing the ability to interact with peers and adults requires cognitive, psychomotor, and affective as well as social skills. Understanding and knowing what is accepted socially in environments and ahving the desire to apply knowledge functionally within situations also requires support basic to the multiple developmental model.

Several other social concepts and group experiences reflective of the developmental model include:

1. learning the necessity of sharing and cooperating with others
2. learning to distinguish between private or personal property and that which belongs to the group
3. developing the ability to organize, play, and follow through on simple tasks
4. establishing routines and patterns of living
5. increasing in ability to make wise choices and decisions in a consistent manner

Conclusion

Kindergarten goals for the seventies is a series of interrelated objectives designed to provide the most stimulating and healthful environment possible for the child. It recognizes the child's ability for early cognitive learning, yet it also recognizes his need to learn through the "playing-out" of real situations. It emphasizes the necessity of advanced technical learnings for today's youngsters as opposed to the learnings of the youngsters of merely a decade ageo. Kindergarten goals for the seventies emphasize the child's need to be a child, that is, to be card for, to feel secure, to feel warm and loved, to feel important, to feel capable. It urges kindergartens to re-examine their goals in order to guard against one dimensional planning. Education is past the stage where one simply stated goal is sufficient to build a viable program for the kindergarten child. Several interrelated goals which reflect theories of development and which are designed to accomodate the whole child are necessary to complete a kindergarten program which will truly benefit the growth of the child.

Kindergarten goals for the seventies is strongly based on the four developmental areas: cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social development. These developmental areas describe the vital needs of the child. When conditions prevail which promote growth of all the developmental areas within the child, a healthy well adjusted and eager to learn child will surely be the result.

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